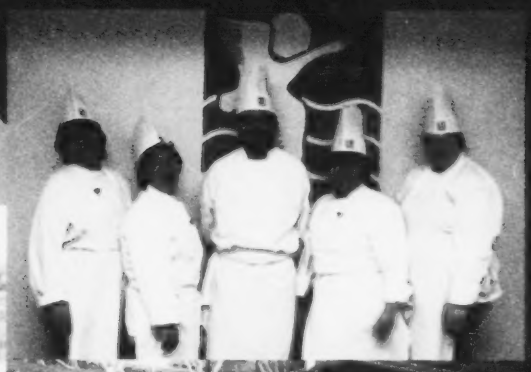
Aurora College

Learning and Success in the 21st Century



CORPORATE PLAN 2001-2005

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Learning and Success in the 21st Century

Aurora College
Corporate Plan
2001 - 2005

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A VISION FOR 2001 - 2005

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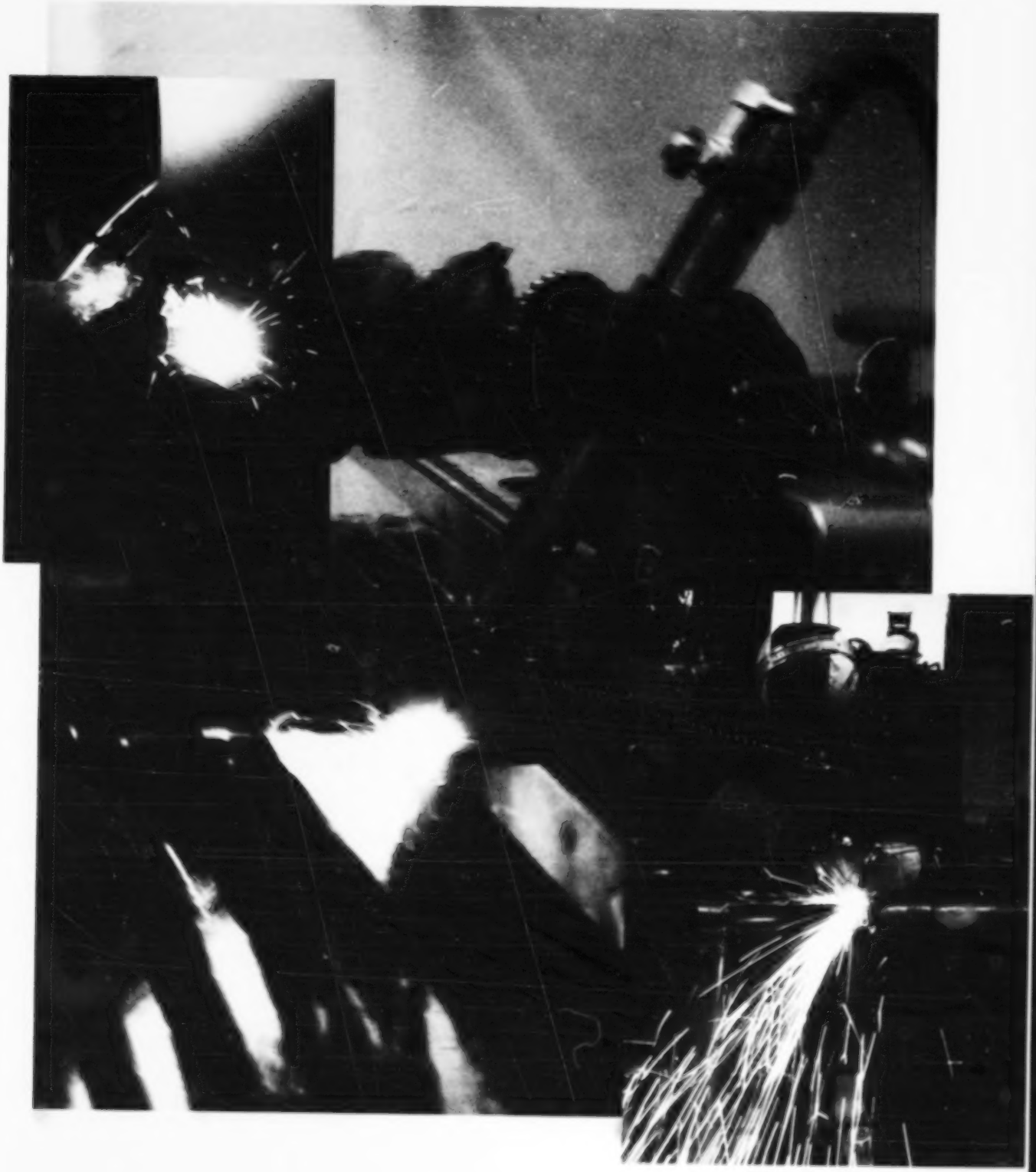

MISSION STATEMENT

Aurora College is dedicated to excellence, leadership and innovation in Northern education and research.

Together, we are creating a vibrant, Northern college that is committed to excellence in education and research and fosters understanding and respect among all Northern people. We will do this by:

- ***... serving students in the best way possible, offering a seamless transition between high school, work, college and university;***
- ***... nurturing critical thinking skills and problem solving abilities;***
- ***... offering a full spectrum of post-secondary education, qualifying Northerners to work or to go on to further education anywhere in Canada;***
- ***... respecting and celebrating aboriginal cultures and linking modern and traditional lifestyles;***
- ***... supporting leadership development for the new North;***
- ***... supporting innovation in education and research;***
- ***... ensuring research and post-secondary education are well integrated, having strong partnerships with industry, communities, governments, and other educational institutions;***
- ***... recognizing our role in supporting the governance, and economic development of Northern communities;***
- ***... attracting and retaining highly qualified Northern staff and faculty; and***
- ***... creating an excellent atmosphere in which staff, faculty and students can work and learn.***

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – Aurora College in a New Era

The Northwest Territories is entering a new era, and Aurora College is once again changing with the times. We are consolidating our strengths and planning our focus for the next five years as we prepare to play an important role in the development of the Northwest Territories. Our role is to support the changing governance structure of the territory through the development of Northern leadership, enhance economic development through the education of a skilled workforce, and contribute to lifelong learning for Northerners and Northern communities.

This plan describes the vision and values that will guide us for the next five years and the actions that we will undertake to fulfil them. The vision is based on in-depth conversations with students, faculty, staff, community partners, aboriginal agencies, government partners, industry and the general public. The development of the plan was undertaken in a co-operative fashion with our faculty and staff, our Board of Governors and a Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

Our Vision

Out of this process, a vision for post-secondary education emerged. Our vision is one of excellence in education and research, providing the best possible post-secondary educational opportunities for all Northerners in a way that acknowledges and respects all cultures, thereby fostering full participation in the northern economy and governance of our communities and new territory. This vision is linked to the goals of the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

Our Values

This vision is based on values that recognize the unique nature of Northern communities: respect, excellence and access.

Our Goals and Objectives

Our goals and objectives were selected to match our values with our understanding of our strengths and challenges, building on our strengths and the opportunities that emerge to address the challenges that we face in an ongoing way. Our goals and objectives for the next five years are:

Goal 1
Strive For Excellence

- Promote an 'ethic of excellence'
- Formalize ongoing evaluation practices
- Implement and communicate our human resource plan
- Ensure cultural relevance
- Establish program specializations at each campus

Goal 2
Increase Enrolment, Retention and Achievement

- Work with community partners to strengthen counseling available to students
- Support student success
- Review early childhood support for college students
- Work with community learning networks to expand library services to community-based college programs
- Enhance the quality of the college experience for students
- Review cost of living needs and housing availability at each campus
- Expand program marketing to youth
- Streamline registration system

Goal 3
Develop Our Governance Structure and Organizational Design To Support Our Corporate Goals

- Examine our existing governance structure
- Examine our organizational design
- Develop a plan for continued growth and integration of the Aurora Research Institute into the college

Goal 4
Work with Industry to Maximize Employment Opportunities for Northerners

- Strengthen needs assessment and labour market analysis in emerging sectors
- Increase professional affiliations to advance graduate opportunities
- Develop new training and education initiatives for industry
- Identify and plan for programs that train and educate

Northerners for expanding public sector roles
- Strengthen science and technology career options
- Plan for training development in new areas as required
- Increase learning opportunities through development of distance capability
- Develop the capacity to respond more effectively to training needs

Goal 5
Increase Funds For Education, Training and Research

- Stabilize existing funding approaches
- Form the Aurora Education Foundation
- Establish an alumni association that will support marketing and fundraising activities
- Increase partnerships with industry and aboriginal governments
- Increase support for scientific research

Goal 6
Create Partnerships in the Delivery of Adult Basic Education

- Improve and co-ordinate the delivery of access programming
- Define a process for developing new partnership arrangements for ABE for interested communities or agencies
- Play a leadership role in the development of community learning networks

Goal 7
Increase Degree Opportunities for Northerners

- Strengthen academic standards
- Undertake comprehensive planning process for College Development
- Establish brokering arrangements in key program areas

CHAPTER 1

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND THE NEW VISION FOR THE NWT

The NWT is entering a new era. With the creation of our new territory comes both hope and optimism. Northerners have worked hard to create a territory that reflects our core values and common history.

The challenges we face today arise not only from political change with the creation of two territories from the old NWT, but from economic change as well. The new diamond industry, and the resurgent oil and gas industry, are developing into leading employers. Preparing Northerners for participation in these industries and other new opportunities is the mandate of Aurora College.

A Vision for Change

The development of this new territory is guided by the vision set out in the *Towards a Better Tomorrow* (2000 – Government of the Northwest Territories publication). In this vision, Northerners hold local jobs, manage Northern land and resources and govern the NWT in a way that respects the rights of all.

Some characteristics of our new territory include:

- the development of appropriate governance structures and shared decision-making mechanisms
- increasing employment rates for Aboriginal people
- Aboriginal cultures are reflected in governance and public institutions
- Northern people are obtaining higher education in record levels
- Internet access is available in every community, providing opportunities for Northerners to participate on a global level
- Northerners are reaping the benefits from emerging economic opportunities in the oil and gas and diamond sectors, and
- Northern workers are being trained for a wide range of job opportunities in the North.

The vision of Northern governance and economic development for and by Northerners is being realized. The question now is, how do we work together to sustain our achievements and to take the next steps? In doing so, how do we ensure that northern culture and history continues to be respected?

Aurora College Plays a Key Role

As the post-secondary institution serving the new NWT, Aurora College must play a leadership role in helping Northerners achieve their goals for the new territory we are building.

In particular, we will continue to provide learning opportunities for over 1000 full-time equivalent enrolments in education programs ranging from adult basic education to trades and technology to university level programs.

Planning Strategically

To lay the foundation for this leadership role, the Board of Governors, administration, faculty and staff held public consultations, listened to learners, talked to our partners and collected community views to form the basis of a corporate plan.

This corporate plan will describe how the Aurora College Board of Governors, administration, faculty and staff intend to respond to what they heard. It describes a new vision for a 21st century education institution that offers programs based on a wide range of learner needs and is committed to excellence in program content, design and delivery. This vision is informed by *People: Our Focus for the Future – A Strategic Plan Update*, prepared by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and by *Towards a Better Tomorrow*, the 14th Legislative Assembly's vision document.

This plan also builds on our accomplishments from our first 30 years. These accomplishments are the foundation upon which we build an evolving Northern college and therefore must be recognized in the planning process. In assessing these past accomplishment, we will focus on our previous five-year corporate plan, *A Blueprint for the Future*. During the life of *Blueprint*, other issues emerged.

Therefore, this plan draws on our long history, recent GNWT planning documents, our last corporate plan, and the issues that have emerged during staff, stakeholders and public consultations.

A COLLEGE FOR AN EVOLVING TERRITORY

Aurora College is a dynamic, evolving post-secondary institution that has played a vital role in supporting Northern development by providing quality post-secondary education for more than thirty years. Since our beginning in 1968 as the Adult Vocational Training Centre in Fort Smith, Aurora College has undergone substantial change. Today, we offer a broad spectrum of post-secondary programs to the entire NWT through both campus and community-based programs.

The amalgamation of Aurora College and the Science Institute of the NWT in 1995 allowed us to strengthen our role in supporting science, research and technology, and to build additional Northern knowledge through our own research and research support.

Over the years, we have ensured the relevance of our programs to Northern development by fostering strong partnerships with governments, industry, universities and community groups.
As we reflect on the past and present, we also look to the future and ask ourselves what the role of Aurora College needs to be in the new Northwest Territories? Will our mandate change? On what values should we base our work? How will we address the needs of the learners and communities in a rapidly changing world?

A Changing Mandate

In this plan, we see ourselves as part of a continuum of lifelong learning and employment in the North. In this continuum, each level of the education process plays a vital role in achieving Northern goals for education: support of economic self-sufficiency, human development, community development, Northern governance, protection of our cultural foundations and the pursuit of personal goals.

Aurora College's role is to respond to the wide-ranging needs of our learners and communities through the development of a responsive mix of educational programs and services.

As shown in Figure 2.1, this involves collaboration with our education partners: GNWT departments, aboriginal governments, employers, other educational institutions, and community groups.

Figure 2.1 Post-secondary Education for Northern Development

Partnerships
Employers, educational institutions, communities, aboriginal governments, cultural agencies, GNWT departments
Educational Services
• Certificate and Diploma Programs
• ABE and Access Programs
• Scientific Research
• University Courses and Degrees
• Traditional Knowledge Research
• Leadership Training
• Work Experience
• Student Services
• Trades and Apprenticeship
Community Needs
• Preparation for Careers
• Educational Upgrading
• Leadership Training
• Relevant Scientific Research
• Educational Supports
• Linkage to Jobs
• Development of Science and Technology Capacity
• Preservation and Documentation of Traditional Knowledge
Information
Labour market information, culturally-relevant learning resources, libraries, information networks, northern research

Using this model, all knowledge resources are linked through information sharing, exchanges of ideas and relevant research.
Figure 2.1 shows that we are part of a larger vision – one that is created by Northerners for Northerners. It also shows we have many potential partners in our work to enhance Northern learning communities.

We are proud of our three decades of success and the progress achieved by Aurora College and our graduates. It is time now to build on this foundation by refining our mission and purpose and by strengthening our programs and services in light of the changing needs of the NWT.

Our Mission and Purpose

Aurora College is the only public college in the NWT. We are mandated by the Government of the Northwest Territories to serve the thirty-three communities in the NWT (Figure 2.3). Our mission is as follows:

Aurora College is dedicated to excellence, leadership, and innovation in Northern education and research.

Our purpose is to support Northerners and communities in fulfilling their aspirations for personal and community development and to prepare them for participation in the work force or higher education. We do this by providing quality educational programs and services and undertaking research activities that:

- prepare Northerners for participation in existing and emerging careers
- respond to the training needs of government, business, and industry
- develop, document and integrate Northern knowledge into our programs and services
- promote science and technology and keep Northerners apprised of new developments
- contribute to learning communities and community learning networks
- increase access to learning through information technology and distributed learning, and
- are enhanced by supportive services.

In fulfilling our purpose, we seek partnerships and work collaboratively in the education and employment continuum to ensure relevance, efficiency and public accountability. We show accountability to learners by supporting our graduates with: transfer agreements with appropriate universities and technical institutes, strong links to professional organizations, and work experience through practical hands-on learning opportunities.

Our Values

In fulfilling our mission and purpose, we are guided by values that represent our philosophy of education. The values that guide Aurora College are:

- respect
- excellence, and
- access to knowl ¹ge and learning.

Respect

Respect is expressed in the traditional and western knowledge we value, our support for learners, staff and faculty and our work with our partners in education.

Knowledge We Value

Fundamental to respect is that we value diversity in knowledge and worldviews. Figure 2.2 shows the Northern knowledge that forms the basis of our programs. It represents a worldview that encompasses traditional knowledge, scientific knowledge and individual and community values and traditions.

Through this model, Aurora College supports aboriginal and Northern people in striving to preserve and enhance culture and language.

Figure 2.2 Northern Knowledge

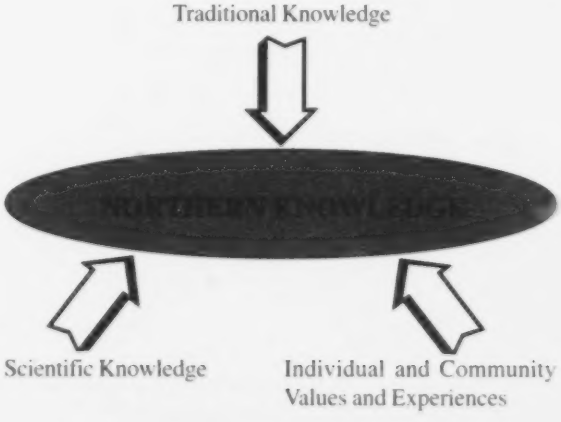

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Figure 2.1 Post-secondary Education for Northern Development

Economic Self-sufficiency
Human Development
Community Development
Northern Governance
Personal Goals
Cultural Foundations

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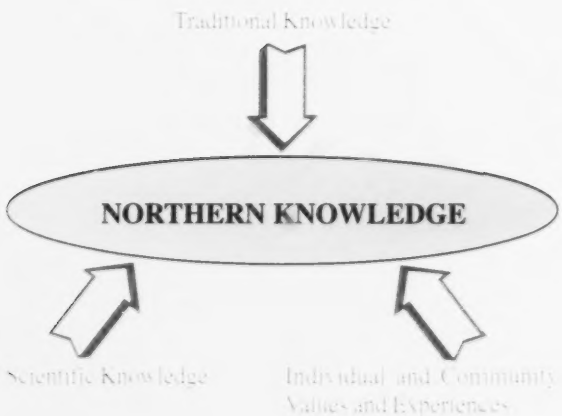
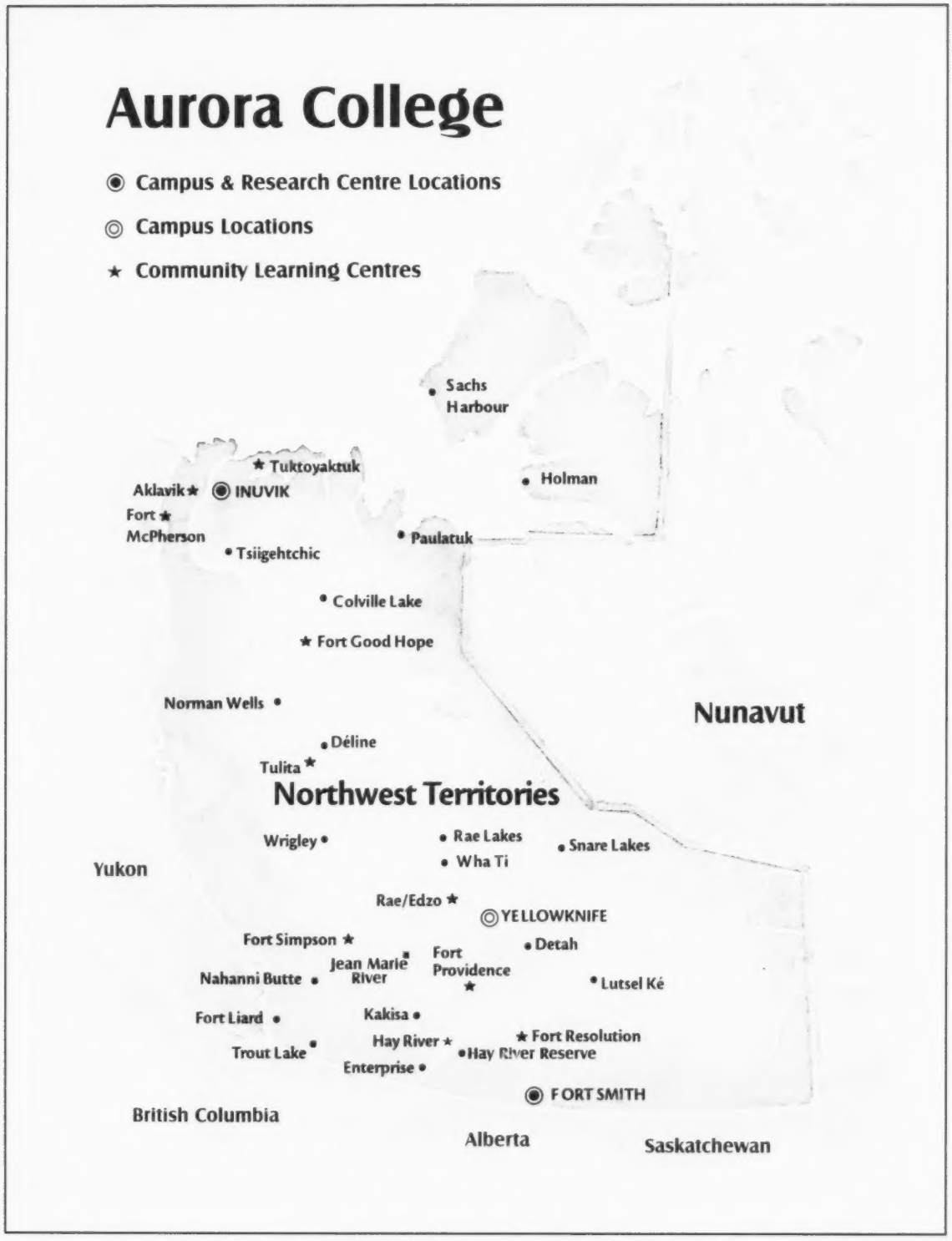


Figure 2.3


Aurora College
◉ Campus & Research Centre Locations
◎ Campus Locations
★ Community Learning Centres
Sachs Harbour
Tuktoyaktuk
Holman
Aklavik★
◉ INUVIK
Fort ★ McPherson
Paulatuk
Tsiigehtchic
Colville Lake
★ Fort Good Hope
Norman Wells
Nunavut
Déline
Tulita★
Northwest Territories
Wrigley
Rae Lakes
Snare Lakes
Wha Ti
Yukon
Rae/Edzo ★
◎ YELLOWKNIFE
Fort Simpson ★
Detah
Jean Marie River
Fort Providence ★
Nahanni Butte
Lutsel Ké
Fort Liard
Kakisa
Hay River ★
★ Fort Resolution
Trout Lake
Hay River Reserve
Enterprise
◉ FORT SMITH
British Columbia
Alberta
Saskatchewan

Our Students

Our students bring skills, knowledge, ideas and goals to their pursuit of further education. We support them in becoming independent learners and thinkers by providing a meaningful learning process and a secure, supportive environment through:

- respect for prior learning
- relevant, culturally based learning through on-the-land experiences and the inclusion of traditional knowledge where appropriate to our curriculum
- responsive counselling services, and
- family accommodations that take into account the needs of adult learners.

Our Staff and Faculty

Aurora College's staff and faculty are professionals who are committed to teaching and research. They bring to their work a body of knowledge and skills that allows us to support Northern communities in the way that we do.

We support our staff in their pursuit of excellence in teaching, learning and research through a broad range of professional development opportunities. Over the years, our faculty and staff have become more representative of the Northern society we serve, and we will continue this trend into the future. Our respect is evident in:

- the Aurora College Instructors Professional Development Committee, which supports higher education for instructors
- staff and faculty participation in curriculum committees, and
- the position on the Board of Governors reserved for a staff representative.

Our Community Partners

Respect for Northern communities and our partners in education is fundamental to the fulfillment of our mission. It is for this reason that we:

- foster community-centered education and research
- actively partner in Community Learning Networks, and
- pursue community partnerships to support Northern development.

The development of community learning networks is also a major thrust of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment's strategic plan update. A community learning network is a supportive continuum of education services ranging from early childhood to post-secondary in which resources and facilities are shared and where learners can find easy entrance points into a range of education services.

Excellence

We are committed to excellence in the quality of education offered in all our programs and services. In Northern communities, excellence is reflected in our pursuit of high academic standards, program and course credit portability, support for research, responsiveness to labour market conditions, and overall accountability to the people we serve. A November 1999 survey to which over 300 Aurora College students responded revealed that excellence is a major factor for them when selecting a post-secondary institution. Our students said that transferability of credits and entire programs to other colleges and universities also ranked high in their decision to attend Aurora College.

Academic Standards

We support high quality training to ensure our students have both career mobility and the credentials to pursue further education.

Research

We demonstrate excellence in research through community consultations, research licensing, support for research and coordination of research projects on behalf of Northern groups.

Labour Market

Excellence also means that programs are designed in response to the most current labour market information and in concert with employers.

Accountability

We review our programs and services on an ongoing basis through internal and external evaluation processes and report the results to our stakeholders. In this way, we are directly accountable to legislators, funders, communities and other partners.

Access to Knowledge and Learning

We strive to ensure that knowledge and learning are accessible to the broadest range of Northerners, ensuring where possible:

- the physical location and mode of instruction is accessible to learners

- the timing of program delivery allows maximum involvement
- learners are supported through accessible student services
- credits are transferable internally and to post-secondary institutions across Canada, and
- barriers to participation are addressed.

We also increase access to knowledge through Northern research. The Aurora Research Institute plays a very important role in working with researchers, universities, learners, communities and other research interests to strengthening the participation of Northerners in scientific research by:

- establishing a Northern Research Agenda in consultation with community groups and agencies
- conducting traditional knowledge research projects for aboriginal agencies, and
- arranging for local people to act as research assistants, thereby exposing them to the scientific community.

By linking the delivery of accessible education programs with the development of Northern knowledge through scientific research, we are ensuring immediate and ongoing access to relevant Northern knowledge and learning.

CATERPILLAR

BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS

Our starting point in building this plan was our last corporate plan, *A Blueprint for the Future. Blueprint* was the first Aurora College plan, envisioned to reflect the needs of the NWT leading up to division. It organized the development of Aurora College into seven strategies. These strategies guided improvements to existing programs and services, as well as established the areas for new development.

In this chapter, we will review the original seven strategic directions and update our progress in each strategy.

Strategy 1:
Increase Community Based Programs in all Regions

In the past five years, we have worked closely with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and other partners to enhance community programming through:

- the Northern Skills Development Program
- the Community Skills for Work Program
- community-based safety training for the oil and gas industry
- funding partnerships
- the renovation or construction of new community learning centres, and
- the delivery of certificate and diploma programs in community locations
- ABE service in communities previously not serviced.

Strategy 2:
Development of Career Based Programs

The activities undertaken through this strategy were intended to match training programs to jobs and ease the transition to work and higher education. Our accomplishments include:

- the creation of the Manager of Program Development position to work with business, industries and agencies to identify training needs, potential training and funding partners
- the launch of innovative programs such as the Electronic Engineering Program, the Computer Specialist program and the Community Development Certificate Program
- the development and delivery of the Mine Trades Access Program to meet the needs of industry
- the development of pre-employment training for the diamond sector
- the addition of a co-operative placement stream to the Management Studies Program
- the expansion of the Natural Resource Technology Program, and
- the assignment of adult educators to act as career counsellors for the communities they serve
- the addition of a 3rd year to the TEP diploma
- development of access programs.

Strategy 3:
Strengthen the ABE Program

Working with ABE practitioners in the field, Aurora College began the ABE Curriculum Development Project in January 1998. Much has been accomplished since that time, including:

- development and piloting of a new curriculum with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment
- in-service training for staff on the new curriculum
- clear guidelines for all ABE curriculum revisions that include an emphasis on the learner's career development
- clearly defined outcomes that are transferable across the territory, and articulated with the secondary school diploma, and
- an accompanying comprehensive package of teaching and classroom assessment strategies and recommended resources.

Strategy 4:
Strengthen the Role of Student Support Services

Each of the regional campuses has improved student support services in recent years. The following improvements are noteworthy:

- Aurora College has invested in library development and acquisition funds for both the Yellowknife and Aurora Campuses;
- a modern student housing facility was renovated during the construction of Yellowknife Campus
- student accommodations at Breynat Hall in Fort Smith were retrofitted with group kitchens allowing students to cook their own meals on premises, and
- Aurora Campus and Thebacha Campus have undertaken partnerships with their respective municipalities to share in the provision of recreation services.

Strategy 5: Develop a Northern Research Agenda and Document Northern Knowledge

The Aurora Research Institute has increasingly taken a pro-active role in advancing northern research and Northern knowledge through:

- the preparation of a Northern Research Agenda for the Northwest Territories and the use of the agenda to focus efforts and resources on projects of highest priority
- the identification of the essential components of student support services for distance education
- the provision of research information in formats suitable to communities and other interested groups through the development of plain language documents
- research on traditional place names for the Aulavik National Park and the continuation of an Ethno-Botany project
- a Traditional Knowledge project on Banks Island, Summer Natural and Cultural History Courses, the illustration of the culture and natural history of the Inuvik Region in a Western Arctic Handbook and the development of an Inuvialuit curriculum that documents the history and culture of the Inuvialuit
- work with the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit on several program and research initiatives including Gwich'in Plant Use, Community Development, and the Natural Resources Technology Program Delivery with a Land Claims specialization, and
- the preparation of an annual Research Compendium summarizing research activities and results for the Northwest Territories.

Strategy 6: Incorporate Northern Knowledge in Post-Secondary Education Programs

Our accomplishments in this regard include:

- completion of a Traditional Knowledge Plan with specific objectives that include the integration of traditional knowledge appropriately in all Aurora College programs and services, and the support of traditional knowledge research
- partnerships with the Dene Cultural Institute on the Hay River Reserve for delivery of the Addictions Studies Diploma and the Alcohol and Drug Counsellor Certificate programs
- the focus of our Northern Skills Development Program on Northern themes including, in Sachs Harbour, a student production of a plain language pictorial booklet of the Muskox Harvest and, in Hay River, the compilation of a book of cultural activities entitled Northern Traditions
- support for the preservation of Aboriginal languages through courses such as Literacy in an Aboriginal Language Level I and Literacy in an Aboriginal Language Level II, curriculum planning for Aboriginal language instruction and the development of aboriginal language material
- development of an educational website based on Northern knowledge gathered during the Arctic Millennium Project.

Strategy 7: Prepare to be a University-College

To date, the primary effort in this regard has been devoted to expanding key programming areas beyond the two-year diploma level, the achievement of enabling legislation and planning for the human resource needs. Accomplishments include:

- the Teacher Education Program has been expanded to a three-year diploma and we have offered a range of fourth year courses on a part-time basis over the past few years
- the Natural Resources Technology Program is now offering post-diploma studies
- the Government of the Northwest Territories passed an amendment to the Public Colleges Act in September 1999 that would allow Aurora College to confer degrees in specific areas.

- funding was acquired for further development for the Northern Nursing Program and Social Work Program as degree programs in association with university partners
- additional advanced nursing programming is in development for Nurse Practitioner and a Bachelor of Nursing degree, and
- the completion of a Human Resources Strategy that encourages the ongoing development of the skills and academic credentials of our staff.

It should be noted that research that has taken place since this goal was initially identified has revealed that Aurora College will not be in a position to become a university college for many years. In order to gain membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), the equivalent of professional accreditation, we would need a minimum of 500 students enrolled in university level programs. Given the population of the NWT, this is not realistic in the near future.

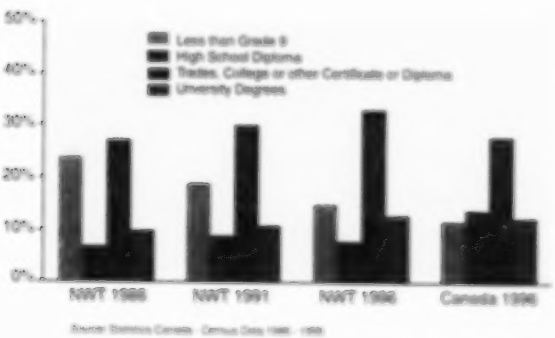
However, our research also revealed a wide variety of options that would allow the College to aid Northerners in reaching their degree goals.

The People and Places We Serve

The NWT is a large, sparsely populated area, with many diverse communities. Aurora College serves 32 large and small communities spread across 1.17 million square kilometres. As of June 2000, the NWT had 41,606 residents, of whom 21,356 are aboriginal people.

Characteristics of our communities that have implications for post-secondary planning include culture and language,

Figure 3.1 Education Attainment Levels



Source: Statistics Canada - Census Data 1986 - 1996

the size and rate of growth of the community and the age distribution of the Northern population.

Culture and Language

The communities we serve are culturally diverse. Forty-six percent of aboriginal people speak their native language. The cultures of aboriginal people play a special role in Aurora College and we intend to emphasize this role in the coming years.

Size of Communities

Our communities range in size from less than 100 to approximately 18,000 people. Many communities are not accessible year round by road.

The majority of Northerners live in the regional centres of Inuvik, Fort Smith, Hay River and the capital, Yellowknife. The highest and most significant rate of growth in the next ten years is expected to occur in Yellowknife and other regional centres, a significant proportion of which will result from inter-territorial migration.

Age distribution

Northerners are younger than the population of other provinces and territories in Canada. Forty-four percent of our population is under the age of 25 and 23 percent of our population is between the ages 10 and 25. Of the 23 percent who are between ages 10 and 25, 56 percent are aboriginal.

A Post-Secondary Education Profile

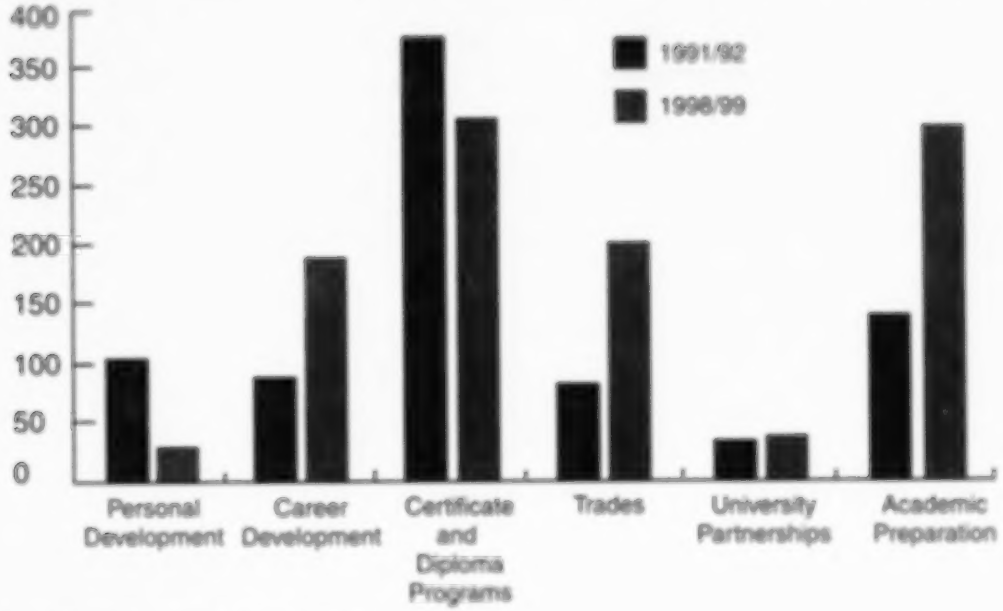
In planning for post-secondary education in the NWT, it is also important to understand our current education levels, employment levels and labour market conditions, and how these are changing.

Education Levels

Education levels among Northerners continue to improve. Some characteristics of this improvement are:

- the number of Northerners participating in post-secondary education is higher than in many other parts of Canada (Figure 3.1)
- young people are staying in school longer
- aboriginal women are the most likely of all adult Northerners to participate in Aurora College programs

Figure 3.2:
Full-time Equivalent Enrolments by Program Type, Aurora College, 1991/92 and 1998/99



Source: Aurora College 1998 Enrolment Reports and 1991/92 Enrolment Statistics

- Northern students can choose from a wide range of educational options (Figure 3.4), and
- the proportion of Northern students who choose Aurora College has shown gradual but definite growth over the past several years.

Employment Levels

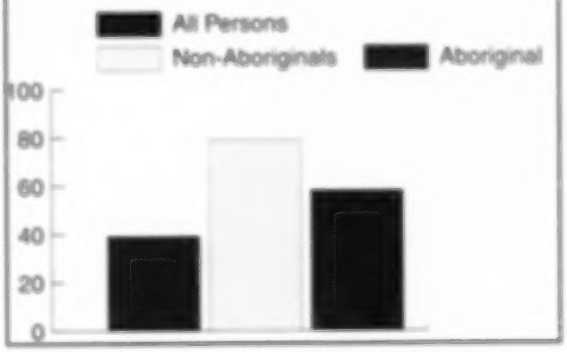
Across Canada, employment opportunities for people without high school completion are declining while the opportunities for those with post-secondary qualifications are increasing.

In the NWT, specific employment indicators include:

- the number of jobs in the NWT increased by 4500 jobs from 1989 to 1996
- the unemployment rate in small communities is much higher than in larger centres, and
- young aboriginal people are more likely to be unemployed than young non-aboriginal people (Figure 3.3)

It is likely then that post-secondary education for aboriginal people, and particularly for people in small communities is key to equality in labour market participation.

Figure 3.3
Youth Labour Force Activity by Ethnic Group - Age 15 - 29 years, 1999



Labour Market Conditions

Our economy is changing rapidly with the expansion of the diamond industry and oil and gas activity resulting in new employment opportunities. Government is currently the larg-

	% Aboriginal	% Non-Aboriginal
* Aurora College	80%	20%
* Other Northern institutions	72%	28%
* Southern College	43%	57%
* University	20%	80%
Total - all students	**49%**	**51%**

Figure 3.4 NWT Post-Secondary Students, Type of Institution by Ethnicity, 1998/99

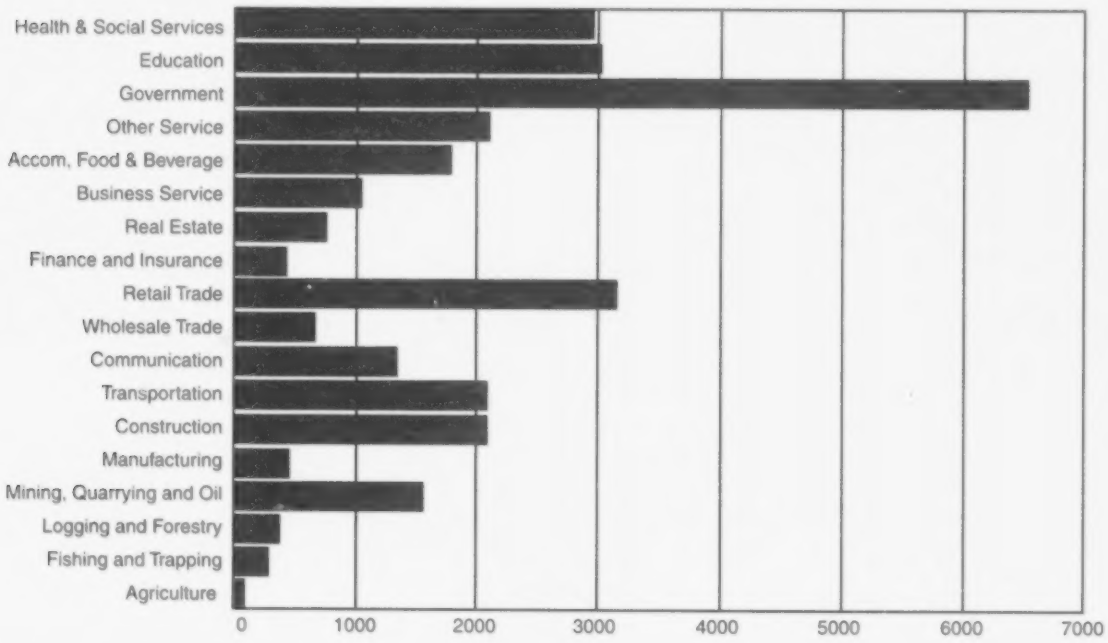
	% Aboriginal	% Non-Aboriginal
* Aurora College	80%	20%
* Other Northern Institutions	72%	28%
* Southern College	43%	57%
* University	20%	80%
Total - all students	**49%**	**51%**

Source: Department of Education, Culture and Employment

est employer in the NWT (Figure 3.5), with 21 percent of the labour force working directly for government and 17.5 percent employed in education, health, and social services. However new opportunities are emerging. Factors that will affect the labour market include:

- the NWT is expected to eventually produce ten percent or more of the world's diamonds
- industry, government, and aboriginal representatives are strong partners in preparing Northerners for careers in the mining sector
- over 500 Northerners have taken advantage of mine training opportunities supported through investment by government, aboriginal organizations and the companies involved
- the natural gas discovery in the Liard Valley is reported to be in the top one percent of natural gas fields in Canada, and
- the Sahtu, Inuvialuit and Gwich'in regions have great potential for oil and gas development, and the Mackenzie Valley corridor could eventually be the site for a major oil pipeline.

Figure 3.5 Employed Population by Occupation



Source: Census of Canada, as reported by NWT Bureau of Statistics

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Aurora College is making a significant difference in northern development through post-secondary education and research.

Post-secondary Education

Some of the ways in which we are making a difference through post-secondary education include:

- we have approximately 1000 full-time and equivalent enrolments each year
- there is an Aurora College presence in seventeen communities (Map 2.3) and we have supported programs in thirty-three communities in the NWT
- our services are geographically dispersed through regional campuses in Fort Smith, Yellowknife and Inuvik
- we provide valuable educational opportunities to a high proportion of adult learners and
- the majority of our students are aboriginal.

A recent graduate survey indicated that 94 percent of Aurora College graduates would recommend the College to others. Specific Aurora College achievements in the past five years include:

- excellent facilities in most communities
- programs designed to meet specific northern needs
- strengthened student services
- access and academic preparation programs provide opportunities for students to meet entrance requirements for diploma programs
- partnerships with universities
- approximately 74 percent of our graduates are working, and
- approximately 20 percent go on to further training or education.

Research and Technology Development

The Aurora Research Institute (ARI) was established as a division of Aurora College to enhance the College's capability to incorporate research, technology and traditional knowledge into educational programs. ARI is a focal point for promoting and documenting Northern knowledge, creating partnerships to support research and providing leadership and programs that promote scientific research to meet community needs.

There is a broad range of research conducted through the initiatives of ARI and other organizations. As part of these activities, ARI keeps concise records of research conducted in the NWT through the administration of the *Scientists Act*.

Research licensed by ARI falls into three main categories of social sciences, physical sciences and biology. These research projects are summarized and published annually.

Aurora Research Institute further contributes to education and research through the maintenance of a 10,000 volume scientific reference library and through ongoing partnerships with other government and community agencies to co-ordinate and support research.

Through the Industrial Research Assistance Program, ARI has provided support to many small businesses and government departments in the areas of technology development and innovations.

THE ISSUES

As the only college dedicated to serving the NWT, Aurora College's mandate encompasses a wide area – from ABE to trades to post-diploma studies to scientific research. We also serve a sparse population scattered over a vast region. These two factors alone lead to a variety of program challenges that we address on an ongoing basis, including:

- the diverse academic levels of students entering our programs impacts the opportunities for the learner, the program and the College
- program specializations will increase effectiveness and efficiency, but we also need to maintain acceptable levels of access to programs
- new labour market opportunities are emerging but limited resources are available to respond to these opportunities, and
- Aurora Research Institute operations could be better integrated into College activities, however the distance between campuses and research centres and the diversity of our mandate limits our ability to achieve this.

When addressing these program challenges, Aurora College must be aware of market conditions for post-secondary education and current fiscal realities.

With respect to market conditions, we attract Northern students. The size of this group is fairly small overall and are further challenged because of education levels. This group is further reduced by those who choose to seek their post-secondary education outside of the Northwest Territories. They do this for many reasons, including the desire to seek a new experience or to take programs not offered in the North.

Southern institutions are also competing for our students through distributed learning programs. To compete in the delivery of distributed learning requires significant investment in communication technology and staff development. The rapid pace of technological change presents serious challenges to our ability to make this investment.

While our greatest competition is from southern institutions, there is also increasing competition from Northern educational agencies as private post-secondary agencies establish programs in the North. Our challenge, therefore, is - how do we expand our student base while responding to the challenges involved in fulfilling our broad mandate? This challenge is further compounded by the tight fiscal conditions we face.

Clearly, stable funding is required to support long term development. There is a need to attract funding partners other than government.

PLANNING OUR ROLE IN NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

To build on our strengths and respond to the changing demands, we have set seven major goals for the next five years. These goals are designed to increase educational opportunities, to improve the services we provide, and to respond to the changes occurring around us. Our goals are:

Goal 1 Strive for Excellence

Goal 2 Increase Enrolment, Retention and Achievement

Goal 3 Develop Our Governance Structure and Organizational Design to Respond to Our Corporate Goals

Goal 4 Work with Industry to Maximize Employment Opportunities for Northerners

Goal 5 Increase Funds for Education, Training and Research

Goal 6 Create Partnerships in the Delivery of Adult Basic Education

Goal 7 Increase Opportunities for Northerners to Obtain Degrees

GOAL 1
Strive For Excellence

Academic excellence will foster increased learner confidence and educational opportunities. Over the next five years, we will build on our strengths by focusing on five key elements: evaluation, marketing, human resource development, cultural relevance and campus specializations.

We will increase our capacity for excellence by examining our work more closely and building an integrated evaluation process. We will develop an evaluation process involving key performance indicators to help us measure and report our progress and identify areas we need to strengthen. In doing so, we will articulate what 'excellence' in adult and post-secondary education for Northerners and Northern communities really means.

Some of our greatest successes such as Teacher Education and Northern Nursing come from programs where the Northern content is high, traditional knowledge is fully incorporated and programs are designed and developed by committed Northerners. Our ability to continue in this way is dependent on our ability to retain and attract qualified Northerners.

We will support the ongoing development of our staff through professional development for existing staff and targeted hiring practices that increase the number of Northerners employed by the College. By hiring qualified Northerners to faculty and management positions, we intend to increase our capacity to understand and support culturally based learning and program design.

We will develop program specializations for each campus based on regional economic activity and needs, infrastructure requirements and the strengths developed at the campus level in recent years. Each campus then becomes a 'lead' in specific program areas where those programs are delivered in more than one location.

Objective 1.1
Promote an 'Ethic of Excellence'

- Define what 'excellence' in adult and post-secondary education and research means through a Board/staff process.
- Promote the "ethic of excellence" to students.
- Establish a customer service ethic for third party clients.
- Review and communicate current governance practices to support excellence within Aurora College and externally.
- Develop and update promotional material that highlights excellence at Aurora College and the importance of excellence in education.
- Attend each high school graduation and give out an Aurora College award for academic excellence at each high school.
- Solicit scholarships through corporate and government partners to promote involvement in the science and technology careers.
- Set aside a proportion of the budget for the development of a college-wide master marketing plan.
- Profile our alumni in marketing material.

Objective 1.2
Formalize Ongoing Evaluation Practices

- Conduct a review of Aurora College program and services evaluation policy and practices, and implement relevant changes.

- In consultation with Education, Culture and Employment, develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in response to the recommended revisions in the evaluation policy.
- Develop mechanisms for collecting, entering, and retrieving KPI and other relevant evaluative data from student record systems, financial record systems, and other appropriate sources.
- Improve student tracking through exit interviews and graduate surveys to get student input on improving the college experience.
- Annually conduct graduate follow-up surveys to inform evaluation, programming, marketing and other relevant operational, planning and strategic decision-making
- After the Board of Governors approves the recommendation of evaluation reports, ensure that progress on implementation plans are periodically reviewed by Senior Management and the Board of Governors.
- Work with Aurora Research Institute to research and review the ISO 9000 process.

Objective 1.3
Implement And Communicate Our Human Resource Plan

- Establish an implementation committee to steer the Human Resource Plan implementation process.
- Develop a plan for promoting Aurora College as a learning organization with ongoing professional development.

Objective 1.4
Ensure Cultural Relevance

Establish an ongoing process of asking students about their needs and ideas with respect to cultural content.

- Consider appropriate methods for coordinating cultural activities on campus and ensure there are appropriate budgets.
- Seek the support of our partners in meeting the resource needs of culturally relevant programs.
- Encourage community groups, government agencies and educational institutions to conduct traditional knowledge research through the Aurora Research Institute.
- Review the traditional knowledge plan to determine our progress in implementing its recommendations.

Objective 1.5
Establish Program Specialization at Each Campus

- Determine which programs are best suited for each campus.
- Establish a plan for transition to a program specialization model.
- Where appropriate, establish access programs at each campus and assist students in transferring to the specializing campus.
- Coordinate program development in areas of specialization between each campus and Head Office staff.
- Establish an inter-campus communication mechanism to integrate all programs and create a one-college environment.
- Place appropriate study resources and library facilities to support those programs at each location.
- Provide professional development opportunities for faculty in each area of specialization to promote quality and excellence in their respective fields.

GOAL 2
Increase Enrolment, Retention and Achievement

Student retention and achievement is more likely to occur if the student has the necessary support systems, quality daycare is accessible, housing is appropriate and recreational opportunities are available.

Objective 2.1
Work with Community Partners to Strengthen Counselling Available to Students

- Explore possible funding partnerships with community governments and local aboriginal authorities.
- Develop capacity for early recognition of students with special learning needs in co-operation with local Social Services agencies.

Objective 2.2
Support Student Success

- Prepare and implement a student success strategy.
- In partnership with the Department of Education, Culture

and Employment establish appropriate student success centres.

- Revise policies and practices to support these centres.

Objective 2.3
Review Early Childhood Support for College Students

- Support appropriate daycare and other early childhood services for the families of our students through shared facilities, MOU's or other appropriate mechanisms.
- Make co-operative education opportunities available to Aurora College Early Childhood Education students by placing them in local daycares, child development centres, head start programs and other childcare services. This would provide both experience for our students, and a source of labour for local child care agencies.

Objective 2.4
Work with Community Learning Networks to Expand Library Services to Community-based College Programs

- Establish agreements with local schools and municipal libraries to stock appropriate resource materials to support community-based program delivery.
- Create portable library collections that can be easily transferred to various locations.
- Make resources available on the Aurora College website so students in communities without a campus can access them.

Objective 2.5
Enhance the Quality of the College Experience for Students

- Develop a plan for improving the residential experience for students and enhancing campus spirit at each campus.
- Explore opportunities for inter-campus sports activities.
- Link fundraising for student activities such as graduation to the coordination of community events.

Objective 2.6
Review Cost of Living Needs and Housing Availability at Each Campus

- Undertake a review of cost of living at each campus.
- Ensure promotional material informs students of cost of living at each campus and community.
- Establish a college-wide accommodations committee made up of staff and students from all regions to monitor ongoing housing needs.
- Conduct a housing needs assessment in order to update the existing Aurora College Housing Business Plan with the goal of ensuring adequate housing over the long term.

Objective 2.7
Expand Program Marketing to Youth

- Conduct junior and high school visits with a team comprised of program staff, students, academic counsellors and staff from ECE, Health and Social Services and industry partners.
- Motivate youth through inspiring and informative promotional material.
- Take a leadership role in supporting more cooperative activities with the high schools through shared facilities, library resources and expertise.
- Actively promote Aurora College programs to high school counsellors and teachers.

Objective 2.8
Streamline Registration System and Strengthen Career Counselling

- Create a central registration system with a student admissions office in each campus.
- Improve assessment and career counselling.
- Promote co-op programs.
- Create an on-line registration system.

GOAL 3
Develop a Governance Structure and Organizational Design to Support Our Corporate Goals

The next five years will see a significant change in the partners we work with, the programs we deliver, and the employment and educational needs of the North. If Aurora College is to effectively respond to these changes we need to review our governance structure and organizational design to ensure that they adequately support the goals identified in this plan.

Objective 3.1
Examine the Existing Governance Structure

- Establish a Restructuring Committee to review our

existing structure, explore and review other college models, and to make recommendations to the Board of Governors and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

- Make recommendations to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment as to any changes that may be required to the Public Colleges Act
- Communicate approved changes to staff, learners and the public.

Objective 3.2
Examine our Organizational Design

- Establish a committee to examine the College organization, examine other collegiate organizational models, and to suggest changes that would support the goals outlined in this corporate plan.
- Make recommendations to the Board of Governors regarding required changes to our organizational design.
- Develop an implementation schedule for approved changes.
- Communicate approved changes to staff, learners and the public.

Objective 3.3
Develop a Plan for Continued Growth and Incorporation of the Aurora Research Institute into the College

- Improve communications and understanding of activities throughout the College and Research Institute by developing a section in the staff orientation manual outlining the duties and responsibilities of ARI staff.
- Identify key areas of involvement for ARI.
- Establish research support services for all College staff through a research fund administered by ARI.
- Where practical, use Aurora Research Institute expertise when undertaking studies and evaluations for Aurora College programs or services.

GOAL 4
Work With Industry to Maximize Employment Opportunities for Northerners

Aurora College's role in supporting our emerging economy is to prepare Northerners for career opportunities that become available. As well, we must help Northerners build new skills so they can play key roles in Northern decision-making.

Our strategies for the next five years will therefore include partnerships with aboriginal organizations and the mining, oil and gas and other industries. We also need a focus on public sector careers that are expanding and an enhancement of Northern capacity for science and technology careers.

However, the continued development of partnerships will present challenges that must be fully addressed. Cost-sharing arrangements must be undertaken, and we must develop the capacity to raise funds to support our goals.

With self-government, new partners will emerge. We will need to develop appropriate partnership models and coordination skills to support these new directions.

Lastly, as we develop new programs for the changing labour market, new and different demands for program development and instructional expertise will emerge.

Objective 4.1
Strengthen Needs Assessment and Labour Market Analysis in Emerging Sectors

- Ensure labour market assessment is undertaken for all new programs.
- Formalize community and regional needs assessment practices, including the development of survey instruments and databases.
- Establish an annual labour market presentation for the Board of Governors.

Objective 4.2
Increase Professional Affiliations to Advance Graduate Opportunities

- Review each program to determine the potential for professional affiliations and initiate discussions to form appropriate professional affiliations.
- Review professional affiliation status with the Board of Governors.
- Promote professional affiliations in information packages as part of the Aurora College marketing strategy.

Objective 4.3
Develop New Training and Education Initiatives for Industry

- Explore the potential for adding an oil and gas technology and exploration option to the Natural Resources Training Program.
- Explore the potential for adding an Environmental Assessment option to the Natural Resources Technology Program.
- Increase the number of industry-based programs.
- Establish advisory committees for all industry-based programs.
- Explore opportunities for additional trades-based certification for the oil and gas industry.
- Establish working relationships with private training groups to advance training opportunities.

Objective 4.4
Identify and Plan for Programs that Train and Educate Northerners for Expanding Public Sector Roles

- Promote career opportunities in the health, social work and education sectors in collaboration with GNWT departments.
- Promote management development opportunities.

Objective 4.5
Strengthen Science and Technology Career Options

- Expand technology related programs, especially those which build skills in the area of computer technology.

Objective 4.6
Plan for Training Development in New Areas as Required

- Identify opportunities and needs with respect to continuing education.
- Develop an annual training plan.
- Initiate a programs and services model for continuing education programs.

Objective 4.7
Increase Learning Opportunities through Development of Distance Capability

- Evaluate existing distance education projects.
- Identify needs and opportunities for distance education programs and projects.
- Develop partnerships with other Canadian institutions for brokering distance education opportunities as appropriate.
- Develop a comprehensive student support structure.

Objective 4.8
Develop the Capacity to Respond More Effectively to Training Needs

- Develop a capacity for responding to the GNWT's economic development strategy and employment development plans for communities, regional authorities or agencies.
- Develop a mechanism for bringing forward new initiatives at every level from the College, ARI and communities.
- Establish working relationships with other training groups to reduce response time.

GOAL 5
Increase Funds for Education, Training and Research

Our strategies to achieve this goal focus on stabilizing our existing revenue base and on building a fundraising capability.

It is anticipated that Government of the Northwest Territories funding for post-secondary education will remain stable over the course of this plan. We must therefore explore ways to more efficiently use existing resources and attract investment in post-secondary education from alternative sources.

Objective 5.1
Stabilize Existing Funding Approaches

- Work with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to review the College Funding Allocation System.
- Formalize a planning format for the presentation of annual programs and services proposals to the Department.
- Explore options to support multi-year funding agreements with funding partners.
- Finalize a multi-year funding agreement with the GNWT.

Objective 5.2
Form the Aurora Education Foundation

- Review existing legislation and promote any necessary

changes to ensure funds raised do not impact on existing funding processes.

- Secure funds from ECE, Aurora College surplus and corporate partners to establish an investment fund.
- Establish administrative capacity for charitable status.
- Establish policy to guide the use of funds raised.
- Develop a fundraising plan.
- Establish a fund development position.
- Establish a role for the Board of Governors in fundraising.
- Support proposal writing and partnership building skill development among staff and faculty.

Objective 5.3

Establish an Alumni Association that will Support Marketing and Fundraising Activities

- Identify a set of graduates to form a pilot alumni activity.
- Support the association to develop policies and guidelines.
- Promote links between Alumni Association, Aurora Foundation, Aurora College programs and professional organizations.
- Encourage alumni to market Aurora College through promotional efforts and fundraising activities.

Objective 5.4

Increase Partnerships with Industry and Aboriginal Governments

- Actively market the contract delivery services of Aurora College.
- Explore opportunities for new partnerships with industry and aboriginal governments.

Objective 5.5

Increase Support for Scientific Research

- Assemble a research advisory group comprised of departments and agencies with an interest in research in the NWT to promote Northern research.
- Continue to strengthen the Northern Research Agenda through the development of a consolidated research plan for the NWT.
- Develop a consolidated funding and fund raising process for Northern research in concert with other departments and agencies.

GOAL 6

Create Partnerships in the Delivery of Adult Basic Education

Academic preparation is one of the most important factors in student success. While grade extensions have increased high school participation rates, graduation rates remain low. For this reason, Aurora College is committed to the continued provision of adult basic education. Successful ABE students comprise a large pool of qualified applicants to our certificate and diploma programs. The College spends 30 per cent of its budget on the delivery of ABE programs, and enrolment in ABE has risen by 214 per cent over the past 10 years. These factors establish ABE as one of our most important services, and we will continue to give it the support it merits.

However, we must also recognize the willingness on the part of some communities or regional authorities to take on the delivery of adult basic education services in their area. For example, the Dogrib Community Services Board has taken responsibility for the Community Learning Centre in Rae. Other communities may want a different level of involvement, while still others may be satisfied with the current arrangement for the foreseeable future. In certain communities the College does not yet have a physical presence, so partnership arrangements for the delivery of ABE are often the only realistic approach to meeting this need.

In recognition of this trend, Aurora College must lay out a process and guidelines by which we would agree to delegate responsibility for ABE to the local level. ABE providers are required to use the territorial curriculum, and would have to meet college standards prior to entry into higher-level programs. Within these confines, we would be willing to explore a greater role in the provision of ABE by community or regional governments. Where the demand for local control is not apparent, Aurora College plans to continue to provide this service for as long as it is needed.

Objective 6.1

Improve and Coordinate the Delivery of Access Programming

- Develop and improve Access programs for selected diploma programs.
- Develop and implement prior learning assessment to enhance student access.
- Promote Access programs through all promotional material.

Objective 6.2

Define a Process for Developing New Partnership Arrangements for ABE for Interested Communities or Agencies

- Enhance partnerships with aboriginal governments, industry and community agencies to support community based delivery of adult basic education.
- Strengthen linkages between adult basic education programs and community high schools to deliver advanced courses collaboratively.
- Explore distance delivery options.

Objective 6.3

Play a Leadership Role in the Development of Community Learning Networks

- Explain and promote the concept of Community Learning Networks to Aurora College staff.
- Redefine the adult educator's role to include facilitation of the establishment of Community Learning Networks.
- Create guidelines for Community Learning Centres to participate in Community Learning Networks.
- Provide training to support community development in education through Community Learning Networks.

GOAL 7

Increase Degree Opportunities for Northerners

While we plan to maintain our focus on ABE, Access, Career, Trades and Technology, Certificate and Diploma Programs, we also recognize that the North and the needs of Northern people are changing. The desire for advanced education opportunities is growing and the need for advanced professional training is emerging in many sectors. To address these needs, Aurora College will use a combination of arrangements to increase degree opportunities for Northerners.

Although our previous corporate plan identified development towards a university college as the mechanism by which we could increase degree opportunities for Northerners, this goal is not possible in the foreseeable future due to the population of the region we serve. However, our research has indicated that there are a variety of options that will enable the College to provide access to university level education.

For example, brokerage of University courses or programs from existing institutions will enable Aurora College to provide Northern students with a variety of accredited courses and programs while still residing in the North. Also, the expansion of transfer agreements will provide greater opportunities for graduates of our diploma programs to attend southern universities to complete university degrees. Furthermore, the College will explore the potential to capitalize on a recent amendment to legislation that could enable Aurora College to confer degrees in selected areas.

During the life of this corporate plan, Aurora College will focus on increasing degree opportunities by examining – on a program-by-program basis – the most effective, efficient, accessible, and affordable options for Northerners to realize their goal of earning a degree.

Objective 7.1

Strengthen Academic Standards

- Standardize courses so students are better able to transfer to other institutions.
- Improve academic preparedness of potential students by strengthening English requirements for diploma programs, enhancing the assessment process for students on entry, reviewing minimum entrance requirements and offering increased academic support through student success centres and specialized tutoring services.
- Establish formal procedures for identifying prior learning and develop appropriate prior learning assessment guidelines.

Objective 7.2

Undertake a Comprehensive Planning Process for College Development

- Establish a College Development Working Group to guide the preparation of a Development Plan.
- Identify changes that may be required at Aurora College and communicate these to staff, faculty and partners.

Objective 7.3

Establish Academic Arrangements in Key Program Areas

- Examine opportunities for our graduates to gain degrees in Teacher Education, Northern Nursing, Management Studies, Social Work and Natural Resources by developing third and fourth year courses, using brokered programs, improving current transfer agreements or creating applied degrees or degrees where appropriate.
- Ensure resources are in place to support the development of selected programs.

- Establish a research team to determine need and identify implications, issues, options and resource requirements for transfer agreements or brokering arrangements.
- Explore the opportunities for a general studies one or two-year university transfer program.
- Profile new programs and services in promotional material and advertising.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

While Northerners see education as a primary investment, they also recognize that fiscal realities may limit the scope of the actions we can undertake. Therefore, we will continue to maximize the return from our existing resources, while striving to locate new sources of funding. It is important in this period of Northern development that we achieve our goals in a way that demonstrates a high degree of accountability in the use of public resources.

There are three key thrusts to our implementation strategy. First, we will focus on new opportunities. Second, we will find new ways of raising funds and providing our services in a cost-effective manner. Third, we will increase the quality of our programs.

Specializing for Excellence

As we move to higher level programming, it is increasingly important that we build our pool of expertise for each program in one place. These "lead campuses" then ensure that programs delivered throughout the territory are well supported and supervised.

Readiness for Opportunity

The plan will focus on taking advantage of opportunities as they emerge. This being said, the timing and resources cannot be clearly identified at this time. Every year an operations plan will be developed that provides program, resource, partnership and human resource strategies for the following year.

Raising Funds and Focusing Our Activities

We will focus on improving our core services and expanding the range of training we offer. To do so we will seek new funding partnerships and arrangements. We will also actively implement a fundraising strategy seeking alternative resources to support post-secondary education.

These three strategies will ensure that our resources are strategically placed and our organization is well situated to respond to changing conditions.

BALANCED PLANNING

Effective planning requires that we balance priorities, timing and resources so that we can do more and communicate our plans to others.

EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The value Northerners place on post-secondary education is increasing. This means that we expect increasing accountability for the degree to which our vision is fulfilled with the resources we have. To ensure that we have the information we need to be accountable, evaluation is undertaken on an ongoing basis.

Of equal importance is how we measure accountability through our evaluation processes.

By evaluating their work in an ongoing way, the board, staff and faculty demonstrate their accountability to Northerners. Information gathered in the evaluation provides the basis for ongoing dialogue with northern students, communities, employers and Northerners. It also provides the opportunity for change. Our goal is to ensure that we can demonstrate access and responsiveness.

A FULL CIRCLE

This plan articulates our vision and plan for a strong Northern college that demonstrates excellence in post-secondary education and research and fosters understanding and respect among Northerners. What we have described is a circle that begins and ends with Northerners.

This vision is not ours alone. It is a shared vision as expressed by the Government of the Northwest Territories in *Towards a Better Tomorrow* and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in *People: Our Focus for the Future - A Strategic Plan Update*.

To show how we will fulfill this vision we have presented a profile of Northern communities from an educational perspective, we articulated our values and introduced our goals

and strategies. As we achieve this vision, Northerners will be able to reach their ambitions for advanced education in the North in a way that is more relevant to our culture and to Northern employment opportunities. Furthermore, academic excellence will foster increased learner confidence and educational opportunities. More Northerners will be prepared for full and active participation in our changing social, political and economic environment.

Our adult and post-secondary education system will expand to include other community partners and thus contribute to a broader commitment to lifelong learning in our communities. Communities, aboriginal governing bodies and industry will be encouraged to get more involved in the education process. A legacy of increased contribution to adult and post-secondary education in the North by community partners and national foundations will be built.

In achieving this vision, we will be accountable to all our partners on the success and challenges we encounter in our work to achieve this vision. By doing so, we will reach out to others in the spirit of partnership and optimism.

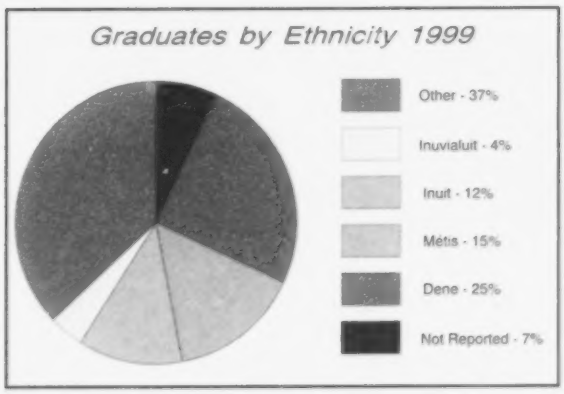
Through a process that starts with a Northern vision and leads to accountability for meaningful results, we will complete the circle. By fulfilling this plan, Aurora College will continue to play a vital role in building our new territory.

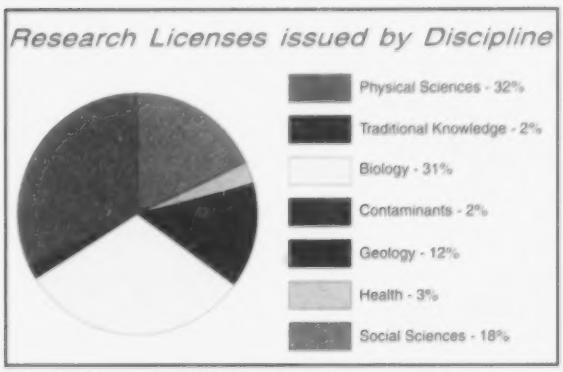
APPENDIX 1 - AURORA COLLEGE STATISTICS

Full-time Equivalent Students by Program Division and Campus 1998-1999

Division	Aurora	Thebacha	Yellowknife	ARI	Total College
Academic Preparation	100.4	95.8	105.3	0	301.5
Certificate	20.3	45.4	27.8	0	93.5
Diploma	59.5	62.6	94.4	0	216.5
University Partnerships	4.4	14.3	20.7	0	39.4
Trades	11.0	157.5	34.4	0	202.9
Career Development	106.3	47.9	37.5	0	191.7
Personal Development	6.8	18.7	0	3.3	28.8
Total	**308.7**	**442.2**	**320.1**	**3.3**	**1,074**

Source: GNWT Bureau of Statistics





Source: Aurora Research Institute

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